

FAITH AND RELIGION IN THE LIFE OF THE UKRAINIANS



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Sociological surveys, as a rule, point the number of believers, based on their self-identification, at two thirds of the country's population. On the basis of these data clergy and scholars conclude that religiosity in the country is on the rise. In our opinion, this statement is discussible, since qualitative manifestations of today's mass religiosity have not undergone sufficient study. The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies conducted a special survey, intended to determine the nature of ordinary present-day believers' religiosity, their life, social orientations, value system and convictions. Results of the survey analysis are presented in this publication¹.

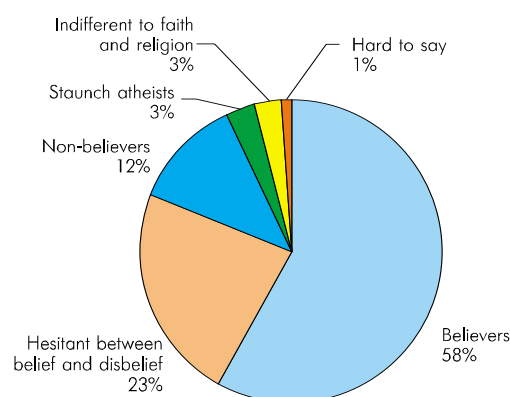
SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF UKRAINE'S POPULATION REGARDING FAITH AND RELIGION

First of all, let us acquaint with the data on self-identification of Ukraine's population with regard to faith and religion based on socio-demographic indices. The general picture of religious self-identification is presented in Diagram.

Sex

68% of females and 46% of males identified themselves as believers (non-believers made up 8% of females and 17% of males, hesitants between belief and disbelief — 21% and 25%, respectively). Such a disparity is natural, since women are more emotional, vulnerable and sensitive, while the male outlook is more rational and pragmatic.

Self-identification of Ukraine's population regarding faith and religion, % of the polled



¹ The survey was conducted in August, 2000. 2017 respondents aged 18 and older were polled. The sample was selected by geographic location and represents a cross-section of basic socio-demographic groups.

**Self-identification of Ukraine's population regarding faith and religion:
the socio-demographic indices,
% of the polled**

	All respondents	Sex		Age, years				Education			
		Male	Female	18-28	29-39	40-49	50 and over	Incomplete secondary	General secondary	Secondary vocational	Higher
Believers	58	46	68	53	56	54	63	67	57	59	50
Hesitant between belief and disbelief	23	25	21	27	24	26	17	16	23	23	28
Non-believers	12	17	8	12	12	12	12	12	13	9	13
Staunch atheists	3	5	2	2	2	3	5	2	2	5	5
Indifferent to faith and religion	3	4	1	4	4	3	1	2	3	3	2

* Undecided respondents are not present in the Table, since their number is statistically insignificant.

Age

The highest share of believers is among people aged 50 and over — 63%. The share of believers in other age groups is roughly equal and makes up 53-56%². Every eighth person, irrespective of age, is a non-believer. In general, people over 50 are more stable in their convictions and belief, since the share of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief in this age group is insignificant — 17%, while among youth (18-28 years old) and in the 40-49 age group — approximately one quarter³.

Education

The highest share of believers is among people with incomplete secondary education — 67%, 59% — among people with general secondary education; 57% — among people with secondary education; 50% — among people with higher and incomplete higher education. The smallest share of non-believers is among respondents with secondary vocational education — 9% (*Table "Self-identification of Ukraine's population regarding faith and religion: the socio-demographic indices"*).

Level of income

Most believers have below-average family incomes — 78%, 20% of believers have average incomes, and only 2% estimated their incomes above average level. Among people who defined themselves as hesitant between belief and disbelief, 71% have incomes below average, 25% — average, 4% — above average; among non-believers — correspondingly, 74%, 23% and

3%. This difference between believers' and non-believers' incomes inspire the thought that **material need is one of the factors conducive to conversion.**

Place of residence

The self-identification to a large extent depends on the place of residence. **The number of those who identify themselves as believers is the highest in the Western region — 84%.** Correspondingly, there are less non-believers — 3% and those who hesitate between belief and disbelief — 11%. Such indicators can be explained by the strong religious traditions in the region. **In the Central region and in the Crimea the share of believers amounts to almost two thirds** (believers make up correspondingly 13% and 10%, the hesitant — 23% and 21%). **The share of believers is relatively high among Kyivites — every second respondent, non-believers — 11%.** To a certain extent this can be the result of successful preacher activities, since Kyiv (unlike the traditionally religious West of Ukraine), was under aggressive atheistic influence for long period of time. The same factor explains the rather high percentage of the capital residents who have no defined position regarding faith — every third person. **In the East, the share of believers makes up 47%, the share of hesitant people is rather high — 26%, and the percentage of non-believers is the highest, as compared to other regions — 18%. The smallest share of believers is in the South — 44% (non-believers — 10%, hesitant — 30%).**

² 18-28 years — 53%, 29-39 years — 56%, 40-49 years — 54%.

³ 18-28 years — 27%, 29-39 years — 24%, 40-49 years — 26%.

Type of residence

Believers are mainly concentrated in villages (61%), townships (62%) and towns with a population up to 50 thousand people (68%). These indicators show that religious traditions have been preserved mainly in smaller settlements, where the steady way of life, customs and traditions are very important.

Character of upbringing in family

The study revealed a correlation between personal religious identification and family environment. Only one third of respondents was brought up in a religious environment. Among those who consider themselves to be believers, such people make up almost one half (48%), while among non-believers — only 4%, and among those who hesitate between belief and disbelief — 11% (Table “Were you brought up in a religious environment at home?”).

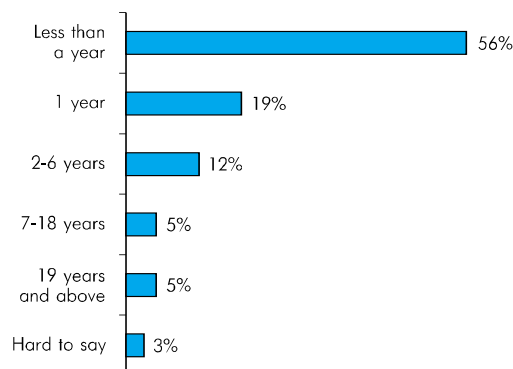
**Were you brought up
in a religious environment at home?**
% of the polled

	Yes	No	Hard to say
All respondents	31	66	3
Believers	48	49	1
Hesitant between belief and disbelief	11	86	3
Non-believers	4	95	1
Staunch atheists	4	91	5
Indifferent to faith	—	98	2

The rite of initiation in religion

Over 85% of the country’s population has been “initiated” into one or another religion, and, although they generally went through this rite in a non-comprehending age, it has had an effect on the subsequent formation and understanding of these persons’ attitude to faith (Diagr. “The age of the rite of initiation in religion”). Within the group of people who identify themselves as believers, 93% have undergone the rite of initiation in religion (a small share of those — in a conscious age), while among non-believers, there were 1.5 times fewer of those (66%), and among those who hesitate between belief and disbelief — 86%.

**The age of the rite of initiation in religion,
% of the polled**



Ukraine is a multi-confessional state with a strong Christian (mostly Orthodox) tradition. For this reason, 88% of those initiated were baptised in accordance with Orthodox canons. Another 9% were baptised in the Greek-Catholic Church, one per cent each — in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches (mostly Jehova’s Witnesses, Evangelic Christians and Evangelic Baptist Christians). Only 0.7% of respondents were initiated into Islam and 0.3% — in Judaism. Among believers, there are more people initiated into different faiths: 83% were Christened, as Orthodox, 13% — as Greek Catholics, 2% — as Protestants, 1% — as Roman Catholics, 1% were initiated into Islam, and 0.4% — into Judaism. Among respondents who hesitate between belief and disbelief, 97% were christened as Orthodox, 2% — as Greek Catholics, and very few — as Roman Catholics and Protestants. Among non-believers, the religions of initiation (normally in the infancy) are still less varied: Orthodoxy (97%), Roman Catholic (2%) and Greek Catholic Church (1%)⁴.

Confession

66% of all those polled affiliate themselves with the Orthodox Church. Prominent, one third of those who described themselves as non-believers also affiliated themselves with Orthodoxy, as well as 77% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief, 12% of those who called themselves staunch atheists, and 51% of those indifferent to faith. Among those who called themselves believers, the Orthodox made up 73%.

Such answers mean that quite often affiliation with a certain religion is declared by people

⁴ Indices on the level 1- 2% were below the processing level, since they do not exceed the standard of deviation admissible for this type of selection, therefore, they should be perceived as illustrative, rather than statistically significant.

who have no religious convictions at all and do not consider themselves believers, and for whom the fact of initiation alone is sufficient to affiliate them with a given faith. On the other hand, believers are not always adherents of some particular faith or denomination. They may consider themselves simply Christians (among believers — 7%, those who hesitate between belief and disbelief — 9%, and even 4% of non-believers), or simply believers without affiliation with any particular faith (the answer “I do not affiliate myself with any religious confession” have been chosen by 2% of respondents).

All of respondents, who described themselves as Orthodox were asked: “With which Orthodox denomination do you affiliate yourself?” It appeared that for two thirds, this does not matter (answer “I am simply Orthodox”); among believers, 55% gave this answer, among non-believers and hesitant people — 69%. Another 7% Orthodox answered that they didn’t know which denomination to affiliate themselves with, it was of no importance for them (among believers — only 4%, non-believers and hesitant — 13% each).

Such a division gives reasons to conclude that **inter-confessional contradictions between the Orthodox Churches are not always pursued to satisfy the spiritual needs of believers.** Perhaps this is the reason for the sharp increase in the number and influence of Protestant Churches and new Charismatic religions in Ukraine.

Among those for whom affiliation with a specific Orthodox denomination is important, the share of adherents of the Kyiv Patriarchate is somewhat higher — 18% of all respondents (believers — 22%, non-believers — 14%, hesitant people — 12%). Those who affiliated themselves with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church make up 14% of all respondents (16% — believers, 7% — non-believers, hesitant people — 10%). The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church accounted for only a few per cent of all Orthodox respondents, primarily representing the group of believers.

Every sixth respondent (16%) could not affiliate himself with any religion. The main reason for this is the existence of opposite convictions (40%), especially among non-believers (48%). **Every fifth respondent (19%) believes that religious feelings can be fully satisfied without the involvement of institutions of one or another religion.** This opinion was especially supported by the believers who did not affiliate themselves with a certain religion (47%). **Another 18% of respondents did not recognise affiliation with any religion, since they have not found one that meets**

their spiritual needs. Some respondents consider the principles of different religions too tough and difficult to follow (among believers, nobody named this reason).

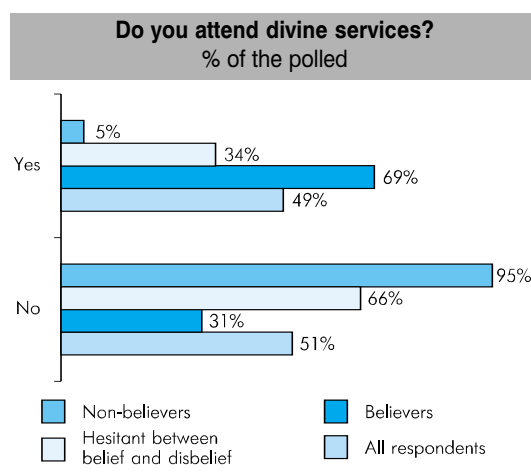
Attract attention respondents’ answers to the question regarding contemporary perception of the essence of a believer, put to all respondents without exception. **64.4% of respondents maintained that “a person can simply believe without confessing any specific religion”.** This thought is shared by 58.1% of those who called themselves believers, but the largest share of adherents of this position is among those who hesitate between belief and disbelief — 82%. **The statement “a believer must confess one or another religion”, customary for the consciousness of people of older generations, was supported by 26%,** many of them believers — 36%, (non-believers — 10%, hesitant — 11%).

Therefore, according to the results of the survey, more than a half of Ukraine’s population consider themselves as believers. The highest share of believers is in the Western regions, the lowest — in the Southern regions. Believers are mainly Orthodox, and two thirds of these do not care about denominational allegiance. Among the factors that influence self-identification are religious education in the family, and the rite of initiation. Out-of-Church faith is widespread among believers.

MANIFESTATIONS OF RELIGIOSITY AND THE LEVEL OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

In addition to confessional self-identification and affiliation with a certain religion, another criterion of personal religiosity is religious behaviour, particularly attending divine services.

Among those who hesitate between belief and disbelief, the number of people attending divine service is twice less than among believers (*Diagr. “Do you attend divine services?”*).



Among believers who attend divine services, the overwhelming majority does so during religious holidays — this answer was given by every second person calling himself a believer (*Table "How often do you attend divine services?"*)

How often do you attend divine services? % of those who attend them			
	All respondents	Believers	Hesitant between belief and disbelief
More often than once a week	4	5	1
Once a week	16	19	3
Once a month	13	15	4
On religious holidays	52	50	66
Once a year	8	6	16
More rarely than once a year	3	2	6
Other	3	3	4
Hard to say	1	—	—

Why do you attend divine services?
% of those who attend them

	All respondents	Believers	Hesitant between belief and disbelief
Communicating with God	45	53	12
Paying tribute to national traditions	29	27	39
Paying tribute to the traditions of my family	18	20	13
Today, attending divine services is customary, and I behave like other people	13	12	18
I attend divine services only on the anniversary of the death of my relatives, friends, etc.	11	10	14
For fun	2	1	5
I go there when I feel spiritual anxiety	20	20	16
I go there when I need to feel relief	20	22	15
Together with relatives, friends, and acquaintances	7	5	17
To confess and receive communion	24	27	11
I feel aesthetically comfortable there	8	9	6
Other	4	4	7

Every fifth believer (19%) attends service once a week, every seventh (15%) — once a month, another 5% attends divine services more often than once a week. Therefore, it can be said that at least 39% of believers show a high level of religious activity (only 8% of those who called themselves believers rarely attend divine services: 6% do this less than once a year, 2% — more rarely).

The main reasons for believers attending divine services and gatherings are: communicating with God (53%), religious sacraments of confession and communion (27%), paying tribute to national (27%) and family (20%) traditions, an attempt to calm spiritual anxiety (20%), feeling of relief (22%). Some believers (10%) attend divine services only on the anniversary of the death of their relatives, friends, etc. (*Table "Why do you attend divine services?"*). Some "modern" believers attend services only because the majority does so (12%), or together with relatives, friends and acquaintances (5%). One of the motives is attending divine services for satisfying aesthetic needs (9%).

One third of people who identify themselves as believers do not attend divine services. The reasons for this are presented in Table "*Why don't you attend divine services?"*"

Material support for religious organisations also presents a kind of religious activity. Among believers, 15% regularly make material donations. And even 2% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief and of non-believers regularly grant material support for religious organisations. Almost half of believers (48%) sometimes help such organisations. 18% of believers, 19% of the hesitant, and 8% of non-believers make donations only on major holidays and pay for occasional rites. Every fifth person who calls himself a believer never grants material assistance to religious organisations.

The belief in the symbols of faith and dogmas is another indicator of a person's religiosity. The results of the poll show that, among the symbols of faith, people cast the least doubt upon the existence of God (this primarily refers to believers and those who hesitate between belief and disbelief), soul and sin — among all respondents those indicators make respectively 78%, 65% and 67%.

Structurally, the belief in the symbols of faith and dogmas among different groups of believers and those who hesitate between belief and disbelief is similar, although the level of belief among the latter is twice lower (*Table "Belief in religious dogmas"*). **98% of believers and 77% of those who**

Why don't you attend divine services? % of those who do not attend them*

	All respondents	Believers	Hesitant between belief and disbelief	Non-believers
I dislike the formality of the divine services	12	13	12	9
I don't believe in God	22	2	5	61
I don't like personal behaviour of priests	10	12	12	8
Divine services take up too much time, which I don't have	17	21	19	11
It seems to me that Church leaders pay more attention to politics than spiritual values	7	7	10	4
I don't like the participation of spiritual leaders of the Church in inter-confessional conflicts	4	5	6	1
I am satisfied communicating with God "one-on-one"	28	42	33	8
None of my friends or relatives attend divine service	8	7	10	8
I cannot attend due to the state of my health	9	19	4	2
There is no house of worship in my vicinity	4	6	5	2
I don't understand religious rites	18	11	26	18
Hard to say	7	2	5	0
Other	2	6	6	9

* The respondents could give all reasonable answers, so the aggregate could exceed 100%.

hesitate between belief and disbelief believe in the existence of God, 82% and 56% — in the existence of the soul, 81% and 59% — in the existence of sin, 63% and 34% — in the existence of the Devil, 60% and 26% — in Heaven, 59% and 29% — in the life hereafter; 59% of believers and 31% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief believe in the wonder-working power of sacred relics, 55% and 23% believe in Hell, **38% of believers and 22% of hesitant believe in the resettlement of souls** (the idea of reincarnation is more intrinsic in the eastern, Buddhist worldview, rather than in the Christian one). **This last observation particularly witnesses the mutual penetration of different cultural worlds and worldviews.**

Thus, the group of people who called themselves believers is characterised by a rather high level of belief in the symbols of faith and dogmas. The group of non-believers is funda-

mentally different in its views on the symbols of faith and dogmas — they mainly deny them. At the same time, 36% of non-believers believe in sin, and every fifth non-believer (19%) believes in the existence of the soul. It is worth noting that 11% of representatives of this group answered that they believe in the existence of God.

During the poll respondents were asked about their belief in healing, specifically in the healing power of priests, preachers, fortune-tellers, wizards, popular healers etc. It appeared that less than half of the polled admitted the existence of human healing powers. Believers tend to believe more in the healing powers of priests — 42% (among hesitant people — 16%, among non-believers — 8%). Believers are equally convinced in the powers of popular healers — 42%. Among those who give preference to healing powers of popular healers were 38% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief and 24% of non-believers. Healing abilities of fortune-tellers and wizards are trusted by 22% of believers, 19% of those who hesitate and 10% of non-believers.

Perception of God. Let us remind that 78% of the polled believes in the existence of God. Respondents were directly asked (without any answers offered) how they see God in their imagination. In all, more than 100 different answers were given. **The most widespread perceptions of God were those of a live being (25%); a supernatural, higher divine force (18%); an invisible superman (9%).** For some people, God is an abstract notion that personifies love, grace, evil, purity, happiness, faith, calm, light, help, protection, care (10%). Theosophical ideas are felt in the answers of the God's perception, as the Highest Wisdom, Absolute, Idea, the law of creation of the World, unity of all powers, energy (7%). Some people see God exactly as depicted in temples and on icons, as Jesus Christ (7%), or as a grey-haired old man (3%). There is also a pantheistic perception of God, as the entire world, the nature (2%).

The importance of certain elements of the religious life. The essential faith and the level of religiosity of believers can be described by their own assessment of the importance of certain elements of the religious life (*Diagr. "The level of importance of the basic elements of religious life"*). For Christian believers, the most important thing is prayer (73%). The rite of initiation into faith — christening — is also very important (66%); for almost two thirds of believers, reading the Bible, wedding ceremony and the religious funeral rite (61%, 60% and 61%, respectively) are important. For more than a half of Christian believers, the

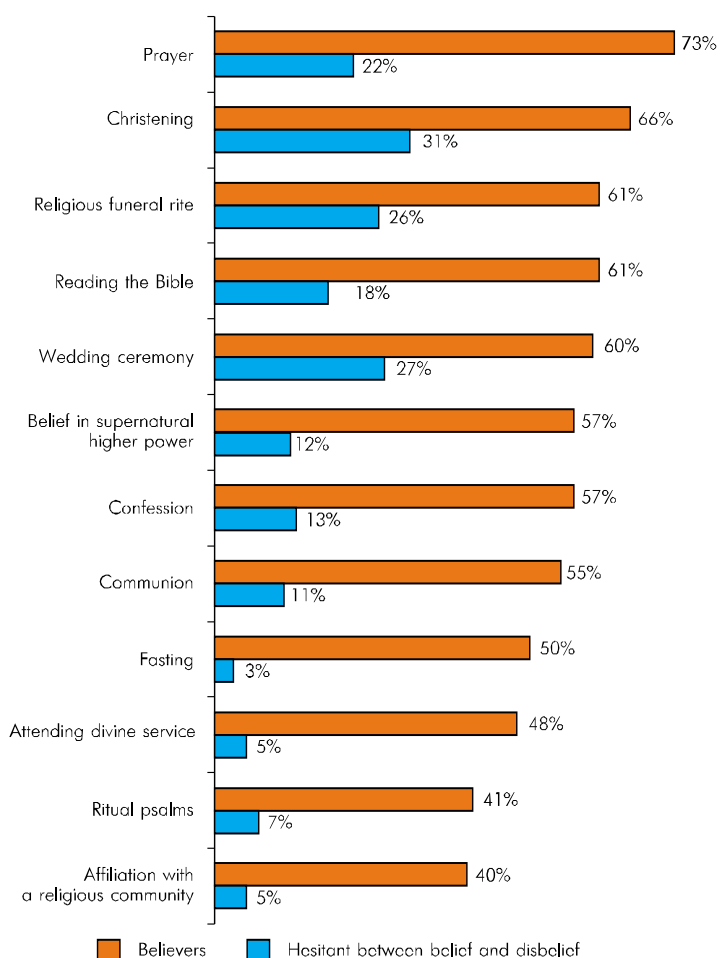


Belief in religious dogmas, % of the polled								
	All respondents		Believers		Hesitant between belief and disbelief		Non-believers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
In the existence of God	78	20	98	2	77	18	11	86
In the existence of the soul	65	28	82	12	56	36	19	75
In the existence of sin	67	27	81	12	59	34	36	63
In the existence of the Devil	46	44	63	26	34	55	5	91
In the existence of Heaven	42	46	60	27	26	62	3	94
In the life hereafter	42	47	59	29	29	61	3	93
In the wonder-working power of sacred relics	44	46	59	30	31	58	9	83
In the existence of Hell	38	50	55	32	23	64	2	94
In the resettlements of souls	28	57	38	45	22	64	5	89

sacraments of confession and communion (55% and 57%) are important, for every second person — fasting. For 57%, the belief in supernatural higher power is important.

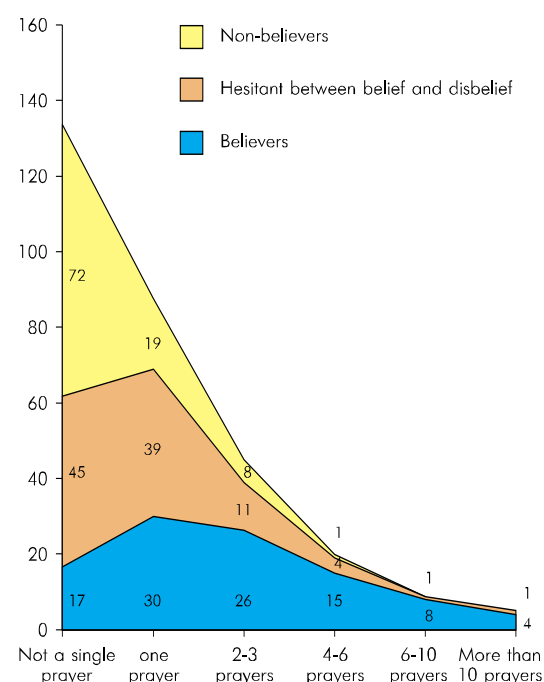
Less than a half of Christian believers consider it important to attend divine services (48%), and affiliation with a religious community is important for a fewer (40%).

The level of importance of the basic elements of religious life, % those who called themselves Christians



Regarding prayer, two thirds of all believers (not only Christian) know no more than three prayers (one — 30%, two-three — 26%), and 17% could not answer this question (*Diagr. "Knowledge of prayers"*). Perhaps these people turn to God in an arbitrary form (if he is personified). At least one prayer is also known to those who hesitate between belief and disbelief (39%), and even to non-believers (19%).

Knowledge of prayers, % of the polled



Although not always in the form of a prayer, but **83% of all polled turn in their thoughts to the Supernatural Power — the God.** 43% does this “often”, 40% — “sometimes”. 65% of believers communicate with the Supreme Power, the Lord, most often, and 33% — “sometimes”. The majority of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief “sometimes” turns to the Supernatural Power — 65% (“often” — 19%). Non-believers normally never turn to God or the Supernatural Power (62%), but every third atheist “sometimes” feels this need, and 5% does this “often”. The main motives behind turning to God are presented in Table “*Motives for turning to the Supernatural Power, the Lord*”.

Motives for turning to the Supernatural Power, the Lord,
% of those who indicated that they turn to them

	All respondents	Believers	Hesitant between belief and disbelief	Non-believers
When feeling danger or fear	43	56	45	41
When feeling spiritual anxiety	42	54	47	37
When feeling grateful for some events in my life	32	44	30	10
While praying	34	54	16	3
When I or one of my relatives falls ill	47	59	58	33
When I need somebody's assistance	28	37	29	19
When I feel lonely	15	21	11	11
When I feel irritated or nervous	11	15	9	3
When I am annoyed with someone	8	11	7	3
When I cannot make a decision	24	31	25	11
When feeling joyful and happy	24	32	20	8
When I want to apologise for breaking religious commandments	20	30	13	3
Other	3	3	3	8
Hard to say	1	1	1	2

These data of the sociological survey give the ground for the following conclusions.

✦ Religious holidays are the motives for attending divine services for half of believers. Every seventh believer attends services once a month, every fifth — every week, only 5% — more frequently than once a week. The main

motives behind believers attending divine services are communicating with God, religious sacraments of confession and communion, paying tribute to the national and family traditions, the intention to soothe spiritual anxiety, to feel relief.

✦ Almost half of all believers render material assistance to religious organisations on some occasions (15% does it regularly).

✦ Intrinsic of believers is the high level of belief in dogmas: in the existence of God, soul, sin, Devil, Heaven, hell, the life hereafter, and in the wonder-working power of sacred relics.

✦ Less than half of believers put faith in the healing power of priests, in the abilities of popular healers; only one in five believers trusts in the powers of fortune-tellers and wizards.

✦ The perception of God in the eyes of a modern man reflects simultaneously Christian, theosophical, pantheistic views, values and sensual-emotional tints, and the images often have a naive anthropomorphous nature.

✦ Christians are quite aware of the importance of the basic elements of the religious life. The most important, among them are: the prayer, christening, reading the Bible, wedding ceremony and the religious funeral rite, sacraments of confession and communion, the belief into the Supernatural (Supreme) Power, fasting.

✦ The majority of believers consider it not only important, but mandatory to exercise religious rites as benchmarks in human life — birth, marriage, or death.

✦ Two thirds of believers know from one to two prayers only.

✦ 65% of believers often turn to the Supreme Power, the Lord. As a rule, this is done while praying. Other motives for prayers are personal health problems or health problems of relatives, a feeling of danger, fear, and spiritual anxiety.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE LIFE OF SOCIETY

With the change of the ideological paradigm in Ukrainian society, religion occupied a noticeable place in the socio-political life of the country and some of its citizens. Respondents were proposed several variants of assessing the role played by religion in today's life of society (Table “*Assessment of the role of religion in the life of society*”).



**Assessment of the role of religion in the life of society,
% of the polled**

	Believers			Hesitant between belief and disbelief			Non-believers		
	Agree	Disagree	No idea	Agree	Disagree	No idea	Agree	Disagree	No idea
Religion does not influence the life of society	24	66	10	34	56	10	46	42	12
Religion is one of the elements of a democratic society	53	22	25	43	34	23	28	43	29
Religion is an element of political life	45	32	23	49	30	21	56	27	17
Religious leaders do not take position on contemporary social problems such as prevention of pregnancy, abortion, AIDS, sexual education, etc.	35	48	17	36	42	22	40	35	25
Religious leaders must defend the poorest citizens, when authorities make decisions that lower the standard of living of the population	90	5	5	90	4	6	78	12	10
Religion is an important factor in the revival of national consciousness and culture	75	10	15	62	17	21	33	39	28
Religion raises the morality and spirituality of people	91	4	5	76	10	14	40	33	27
Religion makes people inactive, indifferent to what is going on in society	5	84	11	14	65	21	38	36	27
Religion is harmful, since it divides people by confessions	6	82	12	16	59	25	36	35	29
Religion is dying and will disappear in the future	4	87	9	7	72	22	19	51	30
Religion is not properly adapted to the needs of modern man	23	60	17	38	34	28	52	24	24
Religious organisations inadequately participate in social work: assistance to the needy, disabled, sick, and elderly people	46	38	26	63	18	19	59	20	21

The Influence of Faith on Life Orientation of a Man

The majority of modern people make the “local world” their first priority — the micro-sphere (the individual and family), and religiosity in no way influences this priority (Table “Priorities of life orientation of the population”). 81% of believers, 86% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief and 84% of non-believers “agree” that a person must, first of all, care about his or her family. And if we consider the answers “tend to agree”, the share of respondents within all three above groups, who spoke in favour of the family as the main value, amounts to 99%. Evidently this is due to the fact that in today’s complex conditions, the family presents the niche most able to preserve the harmony of a person’s world.

The share of those who “agree” that a person must, first and foremost, care for himself or herself is almost the same for believers, hesitant people and non-believers, and makes 52%, 54% and 50%, respectively. More than a third of respondents, irrespective of their religious identification, “tends to agree” rather than disagree with such statement.

Far less attention is paid to the macro-sphere connected with society problems. Believers firmly name servicing to society as a life priority slightly often than non-believers (27% and 21% respectively).

Respondents pay still less attention to the state. Twice as many believers as non-believers hold that a person must first of all serve his state (23% and 12%, respectively).

**Priorities in life orientation of the population,
% of the polled***

	Believers						Hesitant between belief and disbelief						Non-believers					
	Agree			Disagree			Agree			Disagree			Agree			Disagree		
	Agree	Tend to agree	Total	Tend to disagree	Disagree	Total	Agree	Tend to agree	Total	Tend to disagree	Disagree	Total	Agree	Tend to agree	Total	Tend to disagree	Disagree	Total
A person must first of all serve society	27	40	67	18	10	28	25	37	62	23	11	34	21	36	57	23	17	40
A person must first of all serve God	41	31	72	16	7	23	10	31	41	32	17	49	2	7	9	33	51	84
A person must first of all care about himself or herself	52	36	89	8	3	11	54	36	90	6	2	8	50	38	88	8	3	11
A person must first of all care about his or her family	81	18	99	1	—	1	86	13	99	1	—	1	84	15	99	1	—	1
A person must first of all serve his or her state	23	36	59	22	13	35	18	38	56	24	15	39	12	35	47	27	22	49

* Those who did not give a definite answer were disregarded.

Orientation objectives within the group of believers fundamentally differ from those of other groups, as believers point to serving God as the primary mission of a human being — 41%.

Attitude toward social phenomena

The overwhelming majority of those polled **disapprove forcible actions** in defending religious convictions, irrespective of religious identification: the answer “justifiable under no circumstances” was given by 89% of believers, 86% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief, and 88% of non-believers.



While all groups **reject official bribery**, a widespread phenomenon in the present day, believers are more intolerant, in comparison with

other respondents: believers — 78%, non-believers — 70%, hesitant — 74%.

Believers take a more critical stance on **problems related to deprivation from life: suicide, euthanasia⁵ and abortion**. While the number of respondents, who consider suicide unjustifiable under any circumstances, is only 6% higher among believers than among non-believers and those who hesitate (81% and 75%, respectively), the differences in the attitude toward abortion and euthanasia are fundamental. Among non-believers and those who hesitate, every fourth respondent considers euthanasia justified under no circumstances (25% and 24%, respectively), while among believers, their number is greatly higher (40%). One third of non-believers and those who remain undecided with regard to faith, entirely justifies depriving a sick person of life (with its consent). Among believers, there are such people, too, but their number is twice smaller.

The most controversial issue is **the interruption of pregnancy**. Although abortion is considered to be one of the gravest sins (in Christianity), almost a third of believers would permit it under certain circumstances, and 8% justifies abortion on demand. There is also a correlation between faith and attitudes toward abortion: **the stronger the religious convictions of a person is, the more critically he or she views abortion**. Those who see such an operation quite natural — “justifiable under any circumstances” — make up 14% among those who hesitate between belief and disbelief, and almost one forth (23%) among non-believers. By contrast,

⁵ Depriving a sick person of life with its own consent.



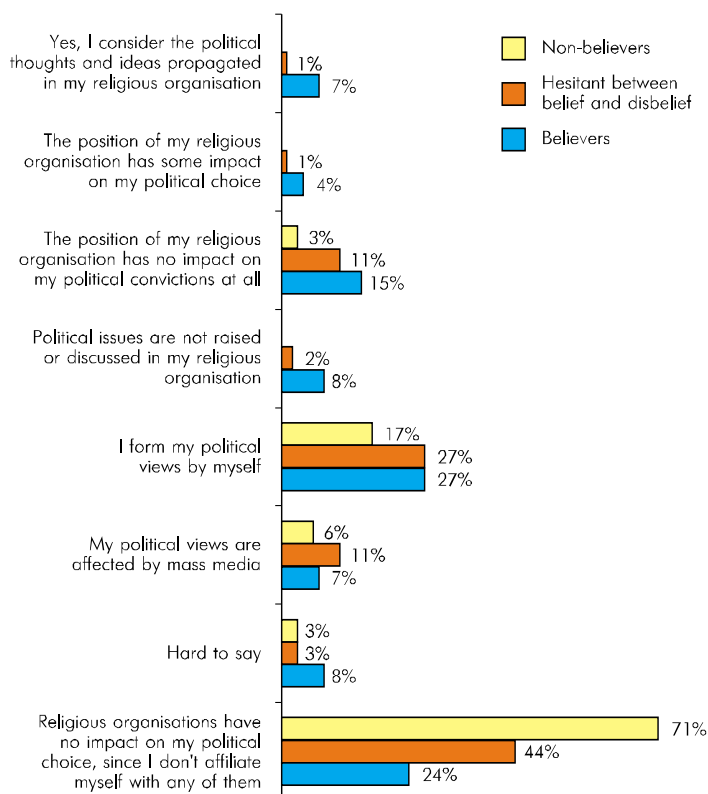
absolute rejection (“justifiable under no circumstances”) of pregnancy interruption was demonstrated by 39% of believers, 22% of those who hesitate, and only 18% of non-believers.

Most respondents negatively assessed **homosexuality**: believers — 72%, non-believers — 70%, hesitant — 65%.

Therefore, despite some “modernisation” of outlook on certain problems of public life, the presence of faith in a person makes him or her more prejudiced to problems relating to moral and ethical principles.

The results of the poll refute one of the widespread thoughts about the significant influence of religion and the religious organisation on political views and convictions. Only 7% of believers indicated that they take into consideration the political thoughts and ideas propagated by the religious organisation to which they belong. Only 4% noticed that the position of the religious organisation has some impact on their political choice. **Political convictions of a man are mainly formed under the influence of other, non-religious, reasons** (Diagr. “The influence of the religious organisation on political convictions of a man”).

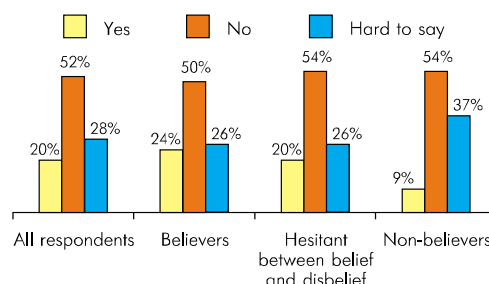
The influence of the religious organisation on political convictions of a man,
% of the polled



CHURCH IN UKRAINE'S SOCIETY

Respondents were asked about the expediency of introducing in Ukraine, as in Great Britain, Sweden and Greece, the institute of a “State Church”. More than half of respondents consider this step inexpedient (Diagr. “Attitudes toward the introducing of the institute of a “State Church” in Ukraine”).

Attitudes toward the introducing the institute of a “State Church” in Ukraine,
% of the polled



Those who agreed with the expediency of the “State Church” in Ukraine, were asked to define which of the Churches ought to obtain this status. 38% named the Orthodox Church, without specifying its denomination. Another 5% believes that the status of the “State Church” should be granted to a new religious institution uniting all confessions. This again proves that **ordinary people perceive Orthodoxy as an integral religion, irrespective of who controls one or another branch of it.**

Those who disagreed with the idea of introducing the institute of a “State Church” in Ukraine, motivated their position by the freedom of conscience, since granting privileges to one of the Churches would cause discrimination against believers of other Churches. Believers abide by this position somewhat more than non-believers — 51% and 43%, respectively. **Every third believer and every fourth non-believer suggests that granting the status of the “State Church” to one of the Churches in the multi-confessional Ukraine would cause more tension in inter-Church and Church-state relations.**

When defining the role of the Church in contemporary Ukraine's society, fundamental differences in opinions were observed. 63% of believers, 37% of those who hesitate and only 14% of non-believers consider that the Church plays a positive role. By contrast, the share of those who don't see any positive role of the Church in today's society is higher among non-believers — 63%; among those who hesitate



between belief and disbelief — 47%, and among believers — 27%. **The share of those who negatively assess the role of the Church in Ukraine is generally low: 9% of all polled, the majority of them — non-believers.**

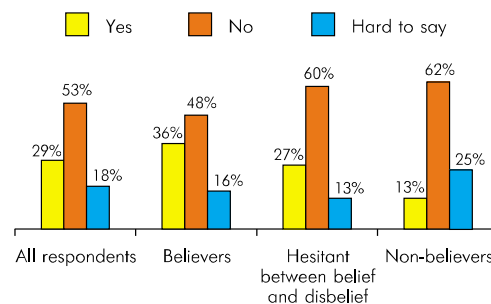
Believers support non-involvement of the Church in the affairs and interests of society and the state more actively than representatives of the other groups, since they see its main duty in serving God. This opinion was shared by 71% of believers, half of those hesitant, and only a quarter of non-believers. The opinion that the Church has some obligations before society and the state was mainly supported by non-believers — 46%, one third of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief, and 16% of believers. Some respondents (18%) could not define their position as to this question.

In order to find out what actions the public expects from religious organisations, respondents were directly asked: “What practical activity do you think religious organisations should perform in our society?” In this way, **priority directions** for operation were identified: helping the sick, disabled, elderly people, homeless children, pensioners, drug addicts.

Church should provide material (food, medicines, clothes, etc.) and moral assistance to them — considered 35% of respondents. Every sixth respondent (16%) believes the moral and spiritual education of a person to be the task of the Church, 14% — moral assistance and support in a difficult situation. Far less respondents (9%) suggest orienting the Church toward interpretation of the religious teaching, education and information about the history or religion and the Church, etc.

More than half of respondents, including almost half of believers (48%), believe that the Church and religion should not be nationally-minded. Therefore, in the consciousness of a modern man, the ideological religious paradigm is gradually changing from a local (state) level, to an open (civilisational) one. Alongside with that, 36% of believers, 27% of those who hesitate and 13% of non-believers tend to support a more conservative view of a nationally-oriented religion (*Diagr. “Should the Church, religion be nationally-minded?”*).

Should the Church, religion be nationally-minded?
% of the polled



The religious identification of a person definitely influences his or her attitude toward such an important aspect of Church-state relations **as the separation of the Church from the state and school from the Church.** Believers tend to assume that such a policy is incorrect (42%), while the majority of non-believers considers it to be an important prerequisite of a democratic state, and the right to the freedom of conscience (52%). Almost one third of all polled has no definite position in this respect, which again proves the low attention and indifference of the broad public to the problem of Church-state relations.

THE ATTITUDE TOWARD NEO-RELIGIONS AND THEIR SPREAD IN UKRAINE

Of late, this subject has literally gained a national significance and attracted the attention of scholars, politicians, journalists, medics, and the authorities in Ukraine. The spread of neo-religious formations is arising polemics, and stimulates the growth of an anti-cult movement. There is a discussion on their recognition as non-religious, since their teaching and practice often do not correspond to the traditional perception of religion. At the same time, UCEPS poll showed, that the majority of the polled citizens have not heard anything concrete about the new-born religions (*Table "Attitude toward the religions and religious trends"*).

While the concrete names of new-born religious trends are known to few people, many are familiar with their activities, in particular, mass services and healing sessions in movie-houses, palaces of culture, at stadiums, in mass media (radio and TV). The public usually disap-



Attitude toward the religions and religious trends,
% of the polled

	Positive	Indifferent	Negative	Never thought about it	Heard nothing about this religion
Orthodoxy	77	15	2	6	—
Greek Catholicism	31	41	6	17	5
Roman Catholicism	28	42	7	18	5
Protestantism	14	45	14	20	7
Islam	14	44	14	22	6
Judaism	12	45	12	22	9
Church of Jesus Christ and Saints of the Last Days	6	24	11	14	45
Church of Christ	8	22	10	13	47
Church of Unity	4	21	10	11	54
Golgotha Church	3	18	9	9	61
Word of Faith	3	18	8	9	62
Victory Church	3	18	8	9	62
Charismatic Churches	3	18	9	9	61
Kyiv Centre of Christian Life	4	19	7	10	60
Krishnaism	5	25	15	17	38
Buddhism	11	33	11	21	24
Transcendental Meditation	5	20	10	11	54
Agni-Yoga	5	21	10	11	53
Different trends of "Era of Aquarius" and "New Era"	3	16	8	9	64

proves their activity: 59,6% of the polled, irrespective of religious identification, called their attitude toward them negative. Only 18% of respondents approve the activities of preachers of the new religious trends. They are mainly believers (21%). This view is also shared by 8% of non-believers and 15% of those who hesitate between belief and disbelief. The basic motive behind a positive attitude toward sermons and healing sessions is the conviction that such events enable people to come to faith (74% of those respondents who positively assess such events).

Only 18% of the polled believe that these events really help sick people to cure. The thought that mass sermons and healing sessions are nothing but fraud that brings material benefits to their organisers is especially spread among those people who negatively assess such actions, and does not depend on the religious identification of a person (43% of believers and 45% of non-believers).

Believers are a bit more than non-believers stuck to the opinion that the activities of foreign preachers of the new religions have a negative effect on the traditional faith of the population — every fifth believer named this reason (among non-believers — 11%). By contrast, the opinion that propaganda of ‘mass healing’ is harmful, since many people are encouraged to hope for a miracle, is more spread among non-believers — 30% (22% among believers). Significant number of those polled, irrespective of their religious

identification, assume that the events organised by the new religions in Ukraine negatively affect mental health of people. **Nearly one half of the respondents (irrespective of their attitude to faith), who negatively assess those events, consider that they should be prohibited by the law. 27% of believers and 22% of non-believers suggest that people should have a choice and bear responsibility for the consequences, so, there is no sense banning the events held by neo-religious preachers.**

16% of respondents who negatively assess such activities noted that the activities of new religious trends won’t be banned, since their representatives can materially “encourage” officials, and also because today, with healthcare being unaffordable, the authorities are interested in stoking the people’s faith in healers (10% of all respondents who negatively assess those activities).

Today, PR programmes and sermons of Churches not traditional to Ukraine, new religious preachers and missions are quite active in Ukraine’s information space, on the radio and TV. **The majority of those polled, when asked about their attitude toward such programmes, believes that religious propaganda on radio and TV should be entirely prohibited, all religious sermons, rites, etc. must be held in specially designed ceremonial buildings and that such proceedings should not be broadcast to mass audiences.** This view is especially advocated by non-believers (57%), and also supported by one third of believers (31%).

Every fourth believer views TV sermons as proselytising, and considers it unimportant which specific religious organisations prepare radio and TV programmes for this purpose. 17% of believers (15% of those hesitant and 9% of non-believers) spoke in favour of equal representation of the new religious organisations and traditional Churches on the private radio stations and TV channels. Only 10% of believers, 9% of those who hesitate and 5% of non-believers are sure that the numerical strength of religious organisations should be taken into account when deciding on their programmes’ broadcasting on radio and TV — in this case, we don’t mention the origin of preachers and the traditional or non-traditional character of religious teachings. 13% of the polled could not define their position regarding TV and radio broadcasting of religious sermons.



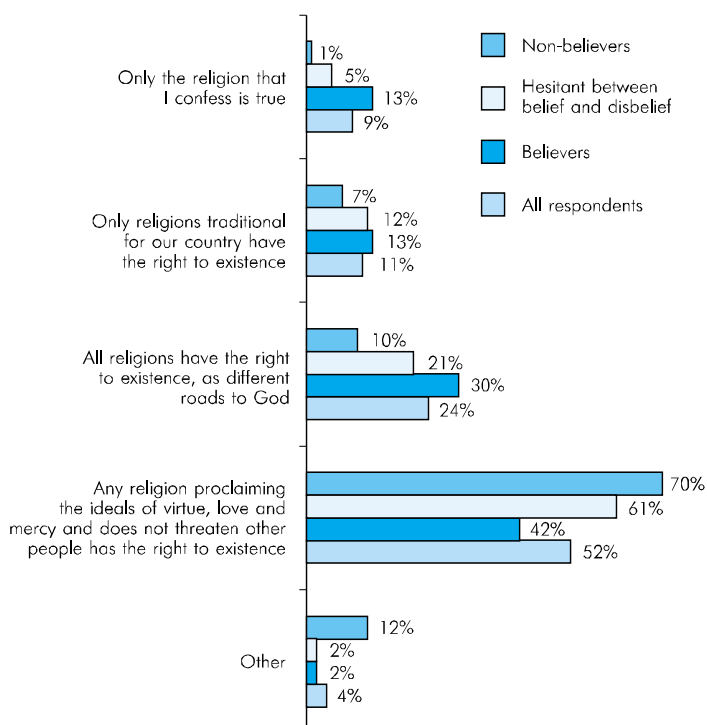
Is the right to the freedom of conscience observed in Ukraine? % of the polled												
	All respondents			Believers			Hesitant between belief and disbelief			Non-believers		
	Agree	Disagree	Hard to say	Agree	Disagree	Hard to say	Agree	Disagree	Hard to say	Agree	Disagree	Hard to say
In Ukraine, there is complete freedom of conscience and equality of faiths before the law	66	20	14	67	22	11	68	19	13	67	17	16
Freedom of conscience and equality of faiths in Ukraine is declared but not secured	39	43	18	41	41	18	39	33	18	26	48	26
Religious organisations and Churches are abusing their rights and freedoms	37	39	24	37	42	21	40	37	23	39	27	34

OBSERVANCE OF THE RIGHT TO THE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE IN UKRAINE

In late 1980s, the problem of religious freedom in Ukraine seemed to be quite simple. It meant the freedom from persecution for religious convictions and for faithfulness to one's Church. However, the transition from totalitarianism to broad religious freedom in 1991-1993

went too fast and could not avoid deformations. A new religious situation emerged, when people understood that they do not live in a confessionally homogenous society. Religious freedom was like an acid test that revealed the loss of traditional religious orientation of Ukrainians. Today's Ukrainian religious space is a conglomerate of faiths and confessions: traditional and non-traditional, archaic and modern-like, domestic and alien, of Christians and new pagans, believers and atheists, and those who do not affiliate themselves with one or another Church.

"Which of the following statements corresponds to your convictions?"
% of the polled



Respondents were offered to express their thoughts about actual observance of the right to the freedom of conscience (Table "Is the right to the freedom of conscience observed in Ukraine?"). The Table shows, that two thirds of the polled believe that complete freedom of conscience and equality of faiths before the law exist in Ukraine.

Demonstrative is the fact that the public opinion is generally convinced in the legitimacy of the right to existence for any religion, that proclaims the ideals of virtue, love, mercy, and does not endanger the existence of other people (Diagr. "Which of the following statements corresponds to your convictions").

ATTITUDE TOWARD INTER-CONFESSIONAL CONFLICTS

Inter-confessional conflicts is an important component of the religious life in Ukraine. Quite a few citizens (39% of those polled) believe that the main reason for conflicts

**The reasons of conflicts between different Churches,
% of the polled***

	All respondents	Believers	Hesitant between belief and disbelief	Non-believers
Because Church hierarchs are striving for power	39	36	43	48
Because the true Church must prove its superiority	9	9	10	7
Conflicts between Churches are purely political	20	21	20	15
The essence of the conflicts lies in the national problem	11	11	13	8
The conflicts are mainly focussed around property and buildings	23	22	25	21
Other	4	5	4	1
Hard to say	21	22	17	18
* Respondents could give all reasonable answers, so the aggregate exceeds 100%.				

between believers of different confessions is the lust for power on the part of Church hierarchs. Non-believers hold this opinion more than

believers (48% and 36%, respectively). Another reason for misunderstanding is presented by disputes around property and houses of worship (23% of those polled). Every fifth respondent sees political interests behind inter-Church conflicts (20%). Believers support this opinion more actively than non-believers (21% and 15%, respectively). 11% of respondents are sure that the essence of opposition between Churches lies in the national problem. Respondents least of all tend to believe that Church leaders engage in conflicts with the purpose of proving the “exceptional truth” of their Church (9%). 21% of those polled did not express their opinion on the problem of inter-Church conflicts (*Table “The reasons of conflicts between different Churches”*).

The results of this survey give grounds for concluding that the religious spirituality inherent in Ukrainians at the previous stages of historic development is presently undergoing a transformation. In the consciousness of a modern believer, the traditional perception of a faithful person, and requirements to his or her religious and social behaviour, coexist with a new outlook of religion and faith. It is based on principles of expediency, rationalism, practicability, and is integrally related with the realities of today’s social and political life⁶.

⁶ Interpretation of the results of such a scaled survey is not a simple task. It is also complicated by the contradictory situation in the religious environment of Ukraine's society, which cannot always be analysed and treated univocally. Therefore, the authors invite experts to jointly discuss the results of the UCEPS social survey which are presented in this material.